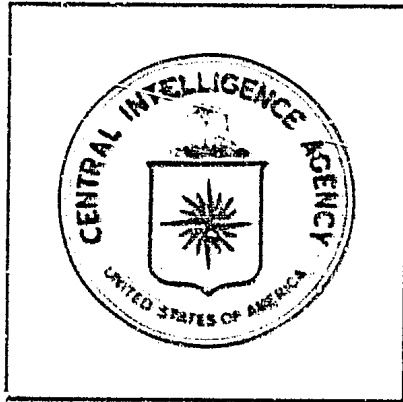


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Thailand's Foreign Policy

The Thai, preoccupied with setting up a parliamentary government during the early months of this year, were caught off balance by the sudden denouement in Indochina. Thailand's new prime minister, Khukrit Pramot, moved with what some observers believed to be "unseemly haste" to accommodate Thai foreign policy to the changed power balance in Southeast Asia. With the initial shock of Indochina now behind them, the Thai have begun in recent weeks to set a more deliberate pace in the conduct of their foreign affairs.

In his first four months in office Prime Minister Khukrit:

- set a one year deadline for the departure of all US military forces from Thailand;
- established diplomatic relations with North Korea and China;
- proclaimed Bangkok's desire to establish friendly relations with the new regimes in Saigon, Phnom Penh and Vientiane, and began a dialogue with North Vietnam;
- declared Thailand's intention to phase out "in principle" the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO).

Simply put, the Thai government took these steps because it believes that the US defense commitment to Thailand, which has been the cornerstone of Thai foreign policy for some thirty years, is no longer a realistic means of ensuring Thailand's national security. There is a clear consensus in the government

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that North Vietnam poses the most serious, immediate threat to Thailand and that the US is no longer willing or able to help Thailand militarily against a Vietnamese threat.

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Enter the Chinese

One basic assumption of Thai foreign policy planners is that China has replaced the US as the dominant power in Southeast Asia.

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Khukrit traveled to Peking in early July to sign the communique establishing diplomatic relations with China

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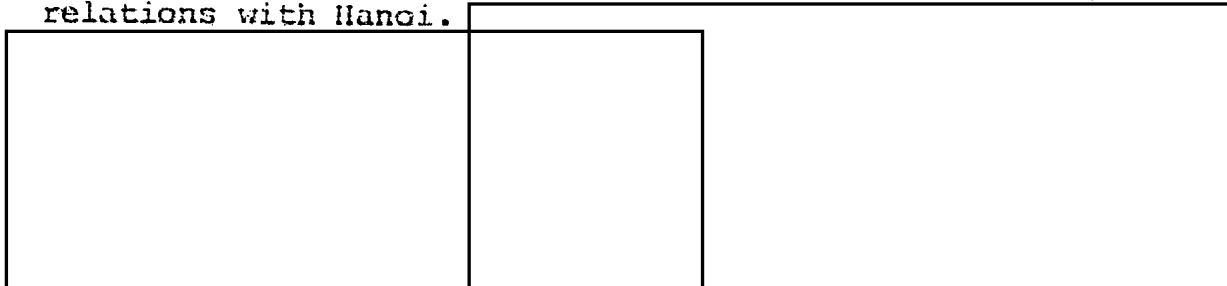
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In anticipation of their talks with the Chinese, the Thai chose to slow down their efforts to normalize relations with Hanoi.



The Thai believe that closer relations with the Soviets will be a further means of blocking the Vietnamese, but they are reluctant to move too fast in this direction for fear of damaging their promising relationship with the Chinese. As a result, Foreign Minister Chatchai has postponed a trip to Moscow to sign a recently concluded cultural agreement.

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Khukrit's impressions from his talks with various Asian leaders will almost certainly play a major role in shaping his decisions on the future course of Thai foreign policy. While his trip to Peking was clearly the centerpiece of his strategy to formulate a new policy, his discussions with fellow ASEAN members also served important purposes:

- an exchange of ideas on how best to deal with the changed situation in the region;
- the creation of a better rapport among Southeast Asian leaders in exploring prospects for greater regional cooperation;
- the strengthening of his political image at home and abroad.

Khukrit's travels seem to have been successful on all points. He returned to Thailand a more self-confident and politically popular prime minister. The talks convinced him that Thailand should work to strengthen ASEAN politically and economically as a means of countering communist influence. Toward this end, he has encouraged an early convening of an ASEAN summit conference and the early implementation of proposals for a free trade area and joint economic projects. In his discussions with the Singaporeans, he stressed the need for ASEAN to demonstrate a united front toward Asian communist influence and to regard any aggression against Thailand as affecting the entire membership.

While the process of adjusting Thai foreign policy to post-Vietnam realities is far from complete, the broad outlines of its new direction are already clear. Thai policy will be neutralist in orientation and anchored to efforts to develop balanced relations with the great powers as the principal means of assuring

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Thailand's security. In an effort to restrict Vietnamese influence in Southeast Asia, the Thai will seek to improve substantially their relations with the Chinese, and to a lesser degree with the Soviets. They will also seek to maintain good relations with the US in order to balance Soviet, Chinese, and Vietnamese influence. To prevent Thailand from being dragged into great power competition, the Thai will work through ASEAN to make the region a "zone of peace and neutrality." In an attempt to strengthen Thailand's neutralist credentials, the Thai are likely to become more active in Third World political and economic causes and to vote more frequently with that bloc in such forums as the UN.

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Cambodia: Leadership Game

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The pecking order among Cambodian leaders is as cloudy now as it was before the communists took over more than three months ago, and there is still no resolution of the untidy situation of Prince Sihanouk's government in exile in Peking. Phnom Penh radio refers to the in-country "government" as "our correct Cambodian revolutionary organization," but little is known about its leaders.

Khieu's on First

Since the communist take-over, Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Khieu Samphan is the only leader residing in Cambodia who has received fairly continuous publicity by Radio Phnom Penh. Samphan's last reported public appearance was in mid-May when he addressed a Vietnam victory rally in Phnom Penh. In late May, the Bangkok press reported that Samphan had been killed in a factional dispute in which he advocated a "nationalistic" line in running the country. The rumor was denied in a press report from Peking but revived again in the Bangkok press in late July.

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Sihanouk on the March

According to a recent AFP report from Peking, the Cambodian communists have invited Sihanouk to return to Phnom Penh. The invitation was reportedly delivered to Sihanouk in Pyongyang in mid-July by Theiunn Prasith, an official at the Royal Government of National Union (RGNU) embassy in Peking, and by Foreign Minister Sarin Chhak. It suggested that the prince return to Cambodia at a convenient time after August 1. The AFP report, citing diplomatic sources, indicated that Sihanouk would leave North Korea for China in late August and make a final decision about his return after having consulted with Chinese leaders. If he decided in favor of the invitation, Sihanouk would visit Phnom Penh briefly in September and then make an official visit to several friendly countries.

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The mid-July invitation is the second or third invitation Sihanouk has received to return to Cambodia and he believes he can no longer postpone his decision. The prince reportedly intends to discuss the situation with his old friend Premier Chou En-lai. Sihanouk is said to be concerned that the invitation was tendered

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only to himself and to Prime Minister Penn Nouth and to fear that he might be arrested upon arrival in Phnom Penh. Sihanouk's apparent desire to delay his decision probably reflects his concern with the conditions he may find in Cambodia and his wariness at placing himself even temporarily under the physical control of Phnom Penh's communist authorities. The Cambodian communists do have some old scores to settle with Sihanouk, but they probably view his international prestige as a useful symbol of legitimacy for their regime.

Peking's desire to maintain good relations with the Khmer Communists probably would preclude any Chinese effort to secure pledges from Phnom Penh in regard to Sihanouk's safety or future role in Cambodia.

Others in the Line-up

Phnom Penh continues to refer to two Peking-based officials with their official titles--Prime Minister Penn Nouth, the aging Sihanouk loyalist who remains in China, and Foreign Minister Sarin Chhak who has returned to China following his recent trip to Europe, Africa, and the Middle East. As for in-country leaders other than Khieu Samphan, propaganda broadcasts have not mentioned Interior Minister Hou Yuon since the communist take-over, and there have been no recent media references to Minister of Information and Propaganda Hu Nim. Although Hu Nim was mentioned by name in broadcasts during the Mayaguez incident, the last reference to him was by title only in the mid-May Cambodian denial of border problems with Thailand.

[redacted] Cambodia is being governed by Khieu Samphan, Ieng Sary--a party figure who has handled Cambodian contacts with Hanoi and

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Peking--and "military chief Som Thanh." Although we cannot identify Som Thanh precisely, previous ralliers have mentioned a Som Thanh, or Som Nath, as a prominent communist military official operating south of Phnom Penh from 1971 to 1974. The same official may have become commander of three infantry regiments in the Phnom Penh Special Region in January 1974.

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Vietnam: The War That Was

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Last month, Radio Hanoi broadcast the first authoritative communist analysis of the offensive in South Vietnam. The article was coauthored by North Vietnam's Defense Minister Vo Nguyen Giap and his deputy and Chief of the General Staff Van Tien Dung. It was dubbed "important" by the radio, subsequently appeared in every major official North Vietnamese publication, and has been given wide dissemination throughout the North and presumably in the South as well.

The article makes three basic points:

- The Communist Party gets chief credit for the victory.
- The North Vietnamese army is commended for the successful execution of the offensive.
- The fall of Saigon makes the reunification of the country inevitable.

Equally significant, however, is what the article does not say. The article for the most part ignores the roles played by the southern communists, especially the Viet Cong's National Liberation Front and Provisional Revolutionary Government, and provides no clues on the present or future role of these two organizations. The authors also maintain that initially Hanoi feared US intervention and took certain "precautions to deal with such an eventuality"--none of these measures is spelled out.

Giap and Dung give all the credit for the planning and success of the offensive to the Vietnamese Communist Party, pointing out that, while certain aspects of Marxist-Leninist doctrine served

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as guidelines, this doctrine had to be adapted to provide a correct line for the Vietnamese resistance.

The party is credited with formulating the overall strategy for the offensive well in advance, but early successive military victories caused an adjustment in the timetable. Until about March 20, according to the authors, the communists were still thinking in terms of a limited offensive; however, after the capture of Ban Me Thuot and the South Vietnamese abandonment of the central highlands "we quickly determined that the direction in which development of this victory must be followed up was towards Saigon." Five days later the final decision to go all out was made. "About March 25, when the fight for Hue was soon to be won, we decided officially and firmly to undertake an historic campaign with a decisive intention." South Vietnamese forces actually evacuated the city on that date.

The attacks in Phuoc Long Province, which was captured in January, were reported to be a "test" of South Vietnamese military capabilities and the US response. Later directives indicated that the fighting in the central highlands and northern provinces were also "test cases."

directives had been issued on April 7th and 9th respectively, calling for a "total offensive" redirected toward the capital area.

If, as Giap and Dung claim, the decision to launch an all out campaign was made in Hanoi around March 25, there was a rather lengthy delay in getting the word out to South Vietnamese cadres in the form of a political directive. More than likely, Hanoi transmitted its military instructions

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directly to subordinate divisions through the corps commands in the south and held back the dissemination of political guidance through COSVN until the North Vietnamese forces had begun to move.

The authors give almost the entire credit for the successful execution of the offensive to the North Vietnamese army. Viet Cong forces received credit for successfully fomenting some local uprisings, but the praise appears more pious than generous. Despite the lengthy treatment given to the exploits of the North Vietnamese army, the article provides no indication of what is to happen to this massive military force—whether it will be maintained as is or demobilized in large part.

During the early stages of this year's campaign, the North Vietnamese apparently expected some direct US involvement, but toward the end considered the US "powerless." Giap and Dung believed that the US stayed out not so much from "impotence" but from the conviction there was little that could be done to save the Thieu government.

The authors make it clear that reunification is an obvious consequence of the fall of Saigon. "The danger of national partition has been removed--the North and South have been reunified into a single stretch of land." In another reference which seems to characterize the dominance of the North Vietnamese army, the two Hanoi generals state that "we (emphasis supplied) have completely liberated....the whole territory of South Vietnam." Thus, there appears to have been little doubt in the minds of these two senior military members of the party politburo that shortly after the collapse of Saigon, Vietnam was one country under Hanoi's control and that the southern administrative and governmental entities are merely temporary trappings, despite the fact that formal reunification has not yet occurred.

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This document is more accurate in its treatment of the final stages of the spring 1975 campaign than it is in rendition of the entire 30-year conflict. Frequently in the historical discourse, the authors substitute doctrine for fact and occasionally ignore various issues altogether. Despite the inaccuracies and incompleteness of the commentary, however, it does reflect the party's official version of the events of the past 30 years.

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National Front Congress in Saigon

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The Saigon municipal branch of the National Liberation Front held its third congress in Saigon from July 27-29. The purpose of the congress was to elect officers to form a new city committee and to adopt a broad general platform of action to "mobilize all the working people."

The convening of the Saigon congress indicates that the National Liberation Front probably will continue to play the key role in organizing noncommunist elements in South Vietnam. Such a front apparatus in the South is similar to the Vietnam Fatherland Front, which Hanoi has used to coordinate activities of mass organizations and to mobilize the population to carry out party policies in the North. In fact, North Vietnam dispatched the chief of the Hanoi Fatherland Front Committee to attend the Saigon ceremonies.

Most of the people who were elected to leadership positions on the committee are open communist party members or figures long identified with the communist cause. For instance, the congress was chaired by Nguyen Van Chi, identified as the former chairman of the Saigon People's Revolutionary Committee and a professor who was active in the resistance against the French. Chi has never been identified as a communist party member, but his deputy, Nguyen Ho, is a party official, and one of the committee's vice chairmen is the wife of Provisional Revolutionary Government President Huynh Tan Phat.

With the establishment of the Saigon city committee--many of South Vietnam's other large municipalities, especially in the northern provinces, have already held their congresses--it is quite possible that the National Front apparatus will hold a congress sometime in the near future to elect members

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to a new national committee. A national congress would probably seriously consider expanding its representation to absorb more non-communists, especially well-known members of the "third force," and possibly some former anti-Thieu South Vietnamese officials. The most well-known figure who would fit into both these categories is General "Big" Minh who surrendered the government to the communists on April 30.

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Laos: Glimpses of the Communist Party

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The Lao communists are giving their clandestine party an unusual amount of publicity. In the past, the party was so hidden that even its exact name was not known outside party circles.

Radio Sam Neua, which has ignored the party's existence for more than three years, has mentioned it four times since mid-July. The first two came during the visit by a Japanese Communist Party delegation to the communist headquarters near Sam Neua. In a long speech of welcome, Lao communist armed forces commander Khamptay Siphandon made several references to fraternal relations between the "Lao revolutionary party" and the Japanese Communist Party. The communique at the end of the Japanese visit, broadcast on July 24, hailed the leadership of the "Lao revolutionary party" and applauded the militant solidarity of the "Lao revolutionary party" and the Japanese Communist Party.

"Lao revolutionary party" may be the new name for the communist party, founded in March 1955 as the Lao People's Party, and renamed the Lao People's Revolutionary Party during the early 1970s.

A communist editorial broadcast over Radio Sam Neua on July 27 and on Radio Vientiane on July 30 admitted forthrightly that the Lao Patriotic Front (LPF) is "under the wise clear-sighted leadership of our party." Another editorial of August 3 spoke of the leadership of the "Lao revolutionary party." In the past the Lao Patriotic Front has been portrayed as the leading force of the Lao left, with no mention of the fact that it is controlled by a more elite communist group. Party leaders have always used the front as spokesman for communist objectives and in official negotiations with the

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[REDACTED]

non-communists. Prince Souphanouvong, as head of the Front, has consistently been portrayed as the leader of the Lao Communists, when in fact he is not. The leader of the communist party is Kaysone Phomvihane, who has never participated in a Lao coalition and is little known even in Laos.

The new spate of unprecedented publicity may presage an overt role for the party in the new Lao political system that is beginning to emerge as the communists assert full control over the country. There are probably few advantages now in maintaining the facade of the Patriotic Front as the principal leftist organization. The communists do not need to worry that an overt communist party might cost them political support. An overt presence also suggests that the communists are finally confident that their party is strong enough to cope with a direct role in governing Laos.

If the party does emerge from secrecy, October 15, the 30th anniversary of the founding of the Lao independence movement, could be the date for an announcement. The lengthy Radio Sam Neua editorial on July 27 laid special emphasis on completing the "democratic revolution" in Laos by October 15. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] Nouhak Phoumsavan, the deputy head of the Lao communist party, intends to travel to Vientiane this fall. Nouhak has not been in the Lao capital since the early 1960s. [REDACTED]

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Lass: Pinpricks of Meo Resistance

The communists have encountered some trouble in their efforts to control the Meo tribesmen in the rugged mountains around Vang Pao's former headquarters at Long Tieng. Meo dissidents in mid-July skirmished at least twice with Pathet Lao troops approximately 18 miles southeast of Long Tieng. Local villagers say that five communist troops were killed and six wounded.

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The villagers claim that some 6,000 Meo, including several hundred with M-16s, are prepared to resist any Pathet Lao efforts to impose firm control. This estimate is undoubtedly exaggerated.

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The Meo are almost certainly incapable of sustaining any significant resistance. The departure of Vang Pao and most other able and experienced officers has left the people virtually leaderless. Even when Vang Pao was on the scene, he found his tribesmen dispirited because of staggering casualties from years of war. Moreover, several thousand of the most anti-communist Meo have fled to Thailand. If fighting should

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[redacted]

erupt, the Pathet Lao can call on numerous North Vietnamese troops in the Plaine des Jarres area for assistance.

Nevertheless, the Pathet Lao are understandably nervous about the Meo and have taken steps to prevent real trouble. Many Meo officers in June reportedly were moved from Long Tieng to the Vientiane area. Their departure, the flight of many tribesmen to Thailand, and the dispersal of others to their farms have virtually emptied Long Tieng. The communists are requiring former irregulars, civil servants, and teachers to participate in seminars in political ideology.

It will take some time for the communists to thoroughly quell the Meo and impose law and order in the area. Many tribesmen have small arms, and their willingness to use them since the war has given the area almost a wild West aspect. The rugged terrain and unfriendly people will make it difficult for the communists to disarm the populace.

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North Korea and Eastern Europe

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The importance of Eastern Europe to North Korea has declined markedly since the 1950s and early 1960s when Pyongyang had not yet begun to establish relations with the Third World and to move toward diplomatic parity with South Korea. Trade with Eastern Europe, usually conducted on a clearing account basis, has increased modestly in dollar value each year but pales in significance when measured against North Korea's massive purchase of more sophisticated technology from the West.

Yet because of their fraternity in the communist camp, North Korea and Eastern Europe retain a special symbolic place in each other's world. The East European nations contributed to the communist postwar reconstruction of Korea and have granted subsequent economic development aid. They have provided guaranteed, if not enthusiastic, support for Pyongyang's diplomatic initiatives vis-a-vis the South.

At the same time, this communist fraternity has imbued North Korean - East European relations with special tensions. In nearly all cases, Pyongyang's relations with the East European capitals reflect the vagaries of North Korean estrangements and reconciliations with the Soviets.

The Balkans

Romania, the communist nation most admired by Pyongyang, displays in the North Korean view the ideal combination of orthodox communist control in domestic affairs and nationalistic independence in foreign affairs. Nicolae Ceausescu apparently admired the same traits in the policies of Kim Il-song when he visited Pyongyang in 1971, and there has since been a sense of personal warmth in the dealings of the two

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leaders that is lacking in North Korean bilateral relations elsewhere in Eastern Europe. Korea and Romania used Kim's visit this spring to underscore their independent positions within the communist movement and to identify their interests with those of the Third World.

The undercurrent of hostility that distinguishes Korean relations with Bulgaria is only thinly veiled. In the North Korean view, Sofia is guilty of an unseemly subservience to Moscow that threatens the attempts of other states to develop their own independent brands of communism. The Bulgarians, in turn, accuse Pyongyang of contributing to disunity in the communist camp. The differences between the two states are long-standing. Pyongyang and Sofia were so estranged in the wake of the Sino-Soviet dispute that diplomatic relations were virtually severed for five years in the mid-sixties. Little attempt was made to mask the frictions during the visits of Todor Zhivkov to North Korea in 1973 and of Kim to Bulgaria in May 1975.

Dealings with Albania are minimal. Kim's visit to Tirana in the summer of 1956 was followed several months later by the visit of Enver Hoxha to Pyongyang, but in recent years political exchanges have been largely confined to the negotiation of annual trade protocols.

Turnabout on Yugoslavia

Belgrade recognized the fledgling North Korean regime in 1948, but ambassadorial relations were not established until 1972, when Pyongyang probably decided that Yugoslavia's usefulness in gaining entree to the Third World outweighed the drawbacks of dealing with a regime that Korea viewed as sadly "revisionist." In his May 1975 stop in Belgrade, Kim won Tito's public blessing for Korea's bid for membership in the conference of nonaligned nations.

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North Korean Trade with East Europe*
(in millions of dollars)

	1973		1974	
	Exports/Imports		Exports/Imports	
Bulgaria	8	10	NA	NA
Czechoslovakia	11	7	NA	NA
East Germany	16	21	19	13
Hungary	4	4	NA	NA
Poland	6	8	12	11
Romania	16	18	NA	NA
Yugoslavia	negl	2	14	9
Total North Korean/East European Trade	61	71	80	(Est) 30
Total North Korean International Trade (Est.)	490	805	600	1255

*Trade statistics for Albania are not available.
NA- not available

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Trade relations are also improving. Early this year, the official Belgrade press predicted trade for 1975 would double the 1974 level of \$23 million. If this projection is met, Yugoslavia will overtake East Germany and Romania as North Korea's leading trade partner in Eastern Europe.

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In contrast to the rest of North Korea's trade with Eastern Europe, purchases from Yugoslavia are made on a hard-currency settlement basis.

The Northern Tier

Korean relations with East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Hungary are best described as businesslike. Pyongyang does not share the same sense of affinity with these four regimes that it does with Bucharest; at the same time there is little hostility of the sort evident in relations with Bulgaria. In the late sixties and early seventies, Poland, Hungary, and East Germany lobbied in Pyongyang for a closer identification of North Korean interests with those of Moscow. The Soviets are no longer using the East Europeans in such a campaign.

Pyongyang was critical of Budapest and Prague in 1956 and 1968, respectively, but in recent years relations have been on an even keel. In the early 1970s Pyongyang established with Hungary and Czechoslovakia the bilateral commissions on economic and scientific cooperation that it has with all the East European nations. Pyongyang has also signed civil aviation agreements with Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Poland. Poland and Czechoslovakia, moreover, are permanent members of the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission, a four-nation body

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created by the Korean armistice of 1953 that ostensibly supervises truce arrangements on the peninsula.



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North Korea: Leader Identifications

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The North Korean mass media list key officials in a fairly systematic order of precedence based on party and government affiliation and rank within these organizations. Familiarity with this precedence system helps in the analysis of appearance listings and the determination of untitled individuals' responsibilities.

The Term "Tongji"

The key title used to identify top level cadres is *tongji*--respected comrade. In recent years, the term has taken on strong ideological significance and is now being used in a more restricted fashion than was true in 1974. Fewer than 35 persons are today regularly referred to as *Tongji*.

Use of the term is restricted primarily to members of the Central Peoples Committee--including Kim Il-song--and Kim's wife, Kim Song-ae. The Central Peoples Committee, an organization that sits above the cabinet structure, includes all members of the Political Committee of the Korean Workers Party and all vice premiers of the cabinet, as well as a smattering of other high party and government officials. The sole member of the Central Peoples Committee who is not accorded the honorific title of *tongji* is Kang Yang-uk, vice president of the country.

Recent usage of the term *tongji* indicates that when a person is removed from the Central Peoples Committee, he loses the title along with his position. Likewise, the use of the term for an official not previously referred to in the honorific indicates that he has been promoted to the Central Peoples Committee.

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Precedence Order

Leaders appearing at government functions are generally listed in the following order: President Kim Il-song, Premier Kim Il, and Vice President Kang Yang-uk. Then come full members of the Political Committee, secretaries of the party Central Committee, and candidate members of the Political Committee. Members of the Political Committee are listed according to rank, not in any alphabetical order. Last to be listed are vice premiers of the cabinet, committee directors of the party, ministers and department chairmen of the cabinet, officials of mass organizations, Pyongyang city officials, and general grade officers of the army.

Normally members of the Central Peoples Committee, who bear the title *tongji* in Korean sources and "comrade" in English [redacted] are followed in appearance listings by groups of government officials who are simply identified as "personages of the sector concerned." If the ceremonial occasion, however, involves representatives of minority political parties or solidarity organizations, these officials follow the titled Central Peoples Committee members.

Certain ministries regularly take precedence over others. A full list has not yet been compiled, but the following patterns are evident: the Ministry of the Peoples Armed Forces precedes the Foreign Ministry and the Foreign Ministry precedes the Ministry of Culture. The Education Committee precedes the Ministry of Foreign Trade, and the Ministry of Foreign Trade precedes the Ministry of External Economic Affairs. [redacted]

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